

**Remarks**

Applicants hereby request continued examination as indicated in the accompanying Request for Continued Examination (RCE). Applicants respectfully submit the accompanying amendments to the claims, in which claims 1, 7, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 29 and 36 are amended to provide claim language of more clarity. New claims 37-49 are added to provide a complete set of dependent claims; or, in the case of new claim 41, to provide more clarity by amending independent claim 14 to recite a single encoded fusion protein (gp120-RT-Nef-Gag) and providing new claim 41 as a separate independent claim reciting the RT-Nef-Gag-gp120 encoded fusion protein.

Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 1, 7, 12-18, 21-24, 28-31, 36-43 are pending.

Previously presented claims 1, 7, 12-18, 21-24, 28-31 and 36 stand allowed.

**Conclusion**

Applicants respectfully submit new claims and request continued examination of this application. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview would expedite prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact their attorney, Virginia G. Campen (reg. no. 37,092) at (919) 483-1012. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute, in one or more patent applications, the claims to non-elected inventions, the claims as originally filed, and any other claims supported by the specification.

Respectfully submitted,

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